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# Ag in the Classroom

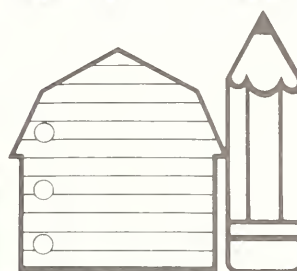


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# Notes

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture



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A bi-monthly newsletter for the Agriculture in the Classroom program. Sponsored by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture to help students understand the important role of agriculture in the United States economy. For information, contact: Shirley Traxler, Director, Room 234-W, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250. 202/447-5727

## Teacher Training a Maine Objective

Twenty outstanding elementary school teachers from Maine recently participated in the first annual meeting of the state's Teachers Training and Curriculum Development Institute.

The Institute's aim is to increase agricultural literacy of school-age children, and to acquaint them with the role and importance of agriculture in society, the economy and the environment.

Held at the Maine Conservation School in Bryant Pond, the week-long program was sponsored by the Maine Agriculture in the Classroom Association and the Maine Departments of Agriculture and Education.

According to state contact Chaitanya York, "educating teachers is the first step to ag literacy

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Maine teachers visit an apple orchard during the week-long Teacher's Training and Curriculum Development Institute. Here, the visitors learn how computers monitor apple processing.

## Celebrate World Food Day

"Rural Youth in Developing Countries" is the theme for 1988 World Food Day.

This annual observance, first celebrated by the Food and Agriculture Organizations of the United Nations in 1979, will be on Sunday, October 16, with community celebrations taking place throughout the week.

Over 150 countries will join the U.S. in honoring the event, its mission being "To increase awareness, understanding, and long-term effective action for food security for all," says Pat Young, of the National Committee for World Food Day.

The United States Department of Agriculture is the lead agency, sponsoring a teleconference with three African leaders and Duane Acker of the Agency for International Development. To be televised live by satellite, the conference may be carried by local TV stations or the Public Broad-

casting Service in most areas.

Carnegie Hall will host the "Ivy League Salute to World Food Day," in another major event, but Young says that "the things that really count are the celebrations taking place within communities across the country. Food collections and public forums are just two ways communities are participating, but, says Young, the commemoration of World Food Day can take almost any form.

Teachers have the opportunity to celebrate the event in perhaps the most meaningful way of all. The Home Economics Association is publishing sample lessons that teachers around the world will be using to commemorate World Food Day. The project is a three-year undertaking, and Young hopes to update the material every year.

To get your copy of the lesson plans, and to find out how your state is celebrating World Food Day, call Pat Young at (202) 653-2404, or write The National Committee for World Food Day, 1001 22nd St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20437.





## From the Director

Dear Readers,

*According to the 1862 Act that established the U.S. Department of Agriculture, its mission is "to acquire and to diffuse among the people of the United States useful information on subjects connected with agriculture in the most general and comprehensive sense of that word."*

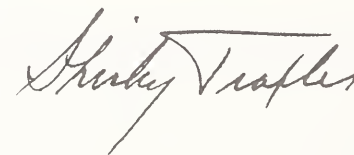
*Dr. Orville G. Bentley, Assistant Secretary for Science and Education, cited the Act in his September 13 remarks at a seminar on agricultural education in conjunction with the release of a book published by the Board on Agriculture of the National Research Council.*

*The book, Understanding Agriculture: New Directions for Education, stresses that agri-*

*culture is too important a topic to be taught only to a relatively small percentage of students. "Beginning in kindergarten, and continuing through 12th grade, all students should receive some systematic instruction about agriculture."*

*We will review the book in the next issue of "Notes." In the meantime, you can order your copy from National Academy Press, 2101 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20418. The price is \$8.95.*

Yours truly,



Shirley Traxler

## Ag on the Chalkboard! 25 Student Activities



Here's an outline of some imaginative ideas you can use to promote student participation. Special thanks to the Kansas Foundation for Ag in the Classroom for sharing these activities with us.

**Suggested Use:** Send individual students or groups to the chalkboard. Give directions, set a time limit and have fun! (This activity works just as well on paper.)

1. Have students draw a farm animal (chicken, pig, cow, etc.) on the board, and see which student has the most complete drawing within 90 seconds.
2. Draw a farm animal picture without lifting the chalk away from the board.
3. Draw some foods that are always served in various geometric shapes, like square bread or round crackers.
4. Have the class unscramble agriculture-related words. Example: hwtea, cbmoien.
5. List as many types of farming as possible. Example: dairy, wheat, beef.
6. Draw three parts of an insect. See who can spell all parts correctly.
7. Have students list some seasonal insects and some all-year insects. Example: fall — locusts, all-year — cockroaches.
8. Have students list products that have honey used in the product name. Example: honey-nut breakfast cereal.
9. Draw/list the various shapes of breakfast cereals. Let students bring in examples.
10. Formulate a list of all the different breakfast cereals.
11. List as many farm-related nouns as you can. Set a time limit.
12. List as many ways to eat turkey as you can within 90 seconds. Example: franks, lunch meat, roast.
13. Name foods that were served at the first Thanksgiving.
14. List some of the responsibilities of a park ranger.
15. Describe the process that milk undergoes from cow to table, and of bread from wheat field to table.
16. See who can make the longest list of wheat products in 90 seconds.
17. List all jobs needed in milk and/or bread production.
18. List some products from particular regions.
19. List various ways in which popular holidays and agriculture relate.
20. Using the school menu, list all the animals used in producing one lunch.
21. List natural and man-made fibers used in shoes.
22. Diagram students' shoes showing the parts and where each section originated.
23. Have the class pick a team sport. List ways an animal product is used in that particular sport.
24. Look at the state seal. List agricultural/farming related activities depicted in the seal (if applicable).
25. Name plants and trees on the school grounds.

# Spotlight

## The Maine Force Behind Teacher Training

"Tim Hathorne offers an impressive combination of curriculum development skills and commitment," says Maine Ag in the Classroom contact Chaitanya York.

Maine AITC benefitted from Hathorne's abilities during the recent Teachers Training and Curriculum Development Institute (see above). Hathorne, an Agriculture and Resources Consultant for the state's Department of Education, worked closely with the AITC committee and participating teachers to make the first annual training program a success.

Hathorne comments, "Ag in the Classroom is exciting for me. It's a natural way to teach, because a good part of the program is hands-on as opposed to just lecturing. And children can build their basic skills through field trips and many classroom activities. Ag in the Classroom is designed for the welfare of both students and teachers."

Hathorne believes AITC is a system that works. "I have never been refused by businesses or industries when asking for educational resources, cooperation or assistance. And when teachers discover that these kinds of resources are available, they get fired up!"

Organization is a key element of Hathorne's style. "Almost a year ago, we formed a subcommittee and met every month to plan the teacher training program. We needed to be very clear with our objectives," Hathorne says an important goal

was to select the most qualified teachers for the week-long session. "We looked for creative, innovative teachers who had a strong interest in teaching about agriculture."

According to Hathorne, the effort devoted to defining the selection criteria paid off. "The teachers were up until 11:00 at night helping us develop AITC materials for other teachers. Their enthusiasm and hard work were incredible! In fact, sixteen of the twenty participants will be trained to conduct workshops next summer."

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"Once you show teachers how important it is to teach about agriculture, they'll never stop asking to participate."

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The consultant has a simple philosophy for success — you must believe in what you're doing. "All of us worked together well because we believe ag-ed is important. That's how you succeed with a program like this. You have to provide teachers with the opportunity to see how important ag-ed is. Take them on trips to farms, let them work with the resources. Don't tell them ag-ed is important — show them. Once you show teachers how important it is to teach about agriculture, they'll never stop asking to participate."

## Maine Objective

*continued from page 1*

among children." Training scholarships were awarded to the teachers who attended the Institute on the basis of their credentials, experience, enthusiasm, and interest in agricultural education.

During the training program, the participants reviewed AITC materials from around the nation. The teachers selected the most attractive resources, and suggested ways to make the ag materials valuable to other Maine teachers.

The scholarship winners also visited several agricultural operations — a dairy farm, an apple orchard, a commercial greenhouse and a working 19th Century farm.

"The teachers inspired me. They demonstrated a strong commitment to ag education," York said.

Maine Agriculture Commissioner Bernard W. Shaw, who was a guest speaker at the Institute,



shared York's enthusiasm. "I thought the training program was terrific. Ag-ed is extremely important — a real priority. Ag in the Classroom will be very attractive to other teachers, and we look forward to helping the program catch on throughout Maine."

Institute participants learn about herb and dried flower production at a local farm.



## Alabama Explores Special Pilot Programs

"The purpose of Alabama Agriculture in the Classroom is to serve as an awareness program. As such, it should cover the far-reaching effects of agriculture. Agriculture is not riding around on a tractor. There are many jobs that hinge on agriculture."

Using that thesis as a background, state department of Education program coordinator Dr. Barbara McMillin said it was a logical move for Alabama Agriculture in the Classroom (AAITC) to develop a new pilot program to promote agricultural awareness in specialized areas of education.

The AAITC curriculum is in use in approximately 50 percent of Alabama's 130 school systems, according to McMillin. As awareness of the program continues to grow, McMillin anticipates the program to expand into other areas and to spread throughout more school systems.

Through the efforts of Susan Borchardt and Deborah Smith of the Baldwin County School System, and Debra Ingram, Youth Services School System, AAITC has been introduced into two new areas.

and patchwork mural paper designs. Her school library had a number of useful books and film strips for use in the curriculum.

"My students were very excited about the program. I enjoyed teaching it, and I'm looking forward to next year," she noted. "I'm planning several field trips for the upcoming year, including visits to a stockyard auction, a Christmas tree farm, a catfish farm and a row-crop farm during harvest."

Deborah Smith teaches the second grade level of educable mentally retarded students. "My students have travelled very little, and this program has made them more aware of Alabama's diversity," she said.

Smith particularly liked the AITC curriculum because it provided her with new material that is readily adaptable to both higher and lower grade levels. "I plan to use this unit for many years to come. It is extremely versatile." Besides presenting facts about agriculture, Smith was able to test student skills in reading, recall, writing and math. She used a number of creative ways to present the information, including arts and crafts, games and songs.

Special activities included a show-and-tell with a student's mother who raises chickens. The mother told the students about raising chickens and brought three chicks to class for the children to touch. In another session, the children studied tomatoes, decorated red balloons to look like tomatoes, and then had tomato soup for a snack.

Smith said she plans to expand the program next year to include studies of catfish, timber, peanuts and Christmas tree farms.

In a second pilot program, Debra Ingram is also using the AAITC program. Ingram is a horticulture teacher at a state correctional facility for juveniles. With the help of McMillan, she is restructuring the K-3 program to benefit her 15-19-year-old male students.

Ingram has encouraged her students to give oral reports on agricultural activities that take place near their hometown areas. The students have used the factual material supplied in the AAITC curriculum, and supplemented it with Ingram's own knowledge.

"My students receive a basic education plus vocational training. I felt they would be interested in the agricultural curriculum because of their training in horticulture," Ingram explained. Her students are responsible for growing the many plants that are transplanted to the grounds of the state capitol in Montgomery.

The Alabama Agriculture in the Classroom program was initiated in 1983 through the cooperative efforts of the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries, the Alabama State Department of Education, state universities and other interested groups. Albert McDonald, commissioner of the department of agriculture, was instrumental in coordinating the committee that initiated and implemented the program in Alabama's schools, kindergarten through third grade.



Alabama students display puppets of characters featured in a popular Ag in the Classroom resource.

Borchardt and Smith are each working with the educable mentally retarded, and Ingram is working with juveniles at a state correctional facility.

A kindergarten through third grade teacher, Borchardt spent several weeks this past term providing a basic introduction to agriculture and information on what is available within the local community. "I covered the subject by telling stories about farms, farm animals, equipment used on farms and how crops are grown," she said.

Borchardt incorporated a number of art activities, including puppet-making, farm pictures



# New Textbook Gets Students "Oregonized"

What do NIKE athletic shoes and Oregon timberland have in common?

They are Oregon's most popular commodities, and a new textbook called *Global Oregon* traces the history of these products, as well as the state's agricultural and economic ties to the U.S. and the rest of the world.

As part of Oregon Ag in the Classroom Foundation's "Get Oregonized" project, the text is designed to help the state's 9th-12th graders meet their high school global studies requirement. It is the second leg of a project which began in 1983 by the state's AITC Foundation. The first effort was a 4th grade *Oregon Studies* textbook.

"No longer can the study of the world be treated only as a problem of knowing about the past or a faraway place," explains Project Director Rod Fielder in the book's preface. "Global awareness begins with the 'here and now.'" Fielder is an Elementary Education professor at Oregon State University, and a member of Oregon AITC's Executive Board.

By recruiting teachers from school districts all across the state to author the text, Fielder and his associates compiled a book that traces Oregon commodities from centuries past to present day. The first chapter of *Global Oregon* features the



NIKE story, which began with the collaboration of a track coach and his star runner to develop a good quality athletic shoe, and ended up as a \$900 million industry.

Other topics include the history of the state's timber farming, water resources, industry and agriculture.

The text was a collaborative effort of Oregon State University, Oregon AITC Foundation, teachers and other volunteers. It was printed this spring, and has been field-tested, reviewed and revised. *Global Oregon* is available through the Northwest Textbook Depository, P.O. Box 5608, Portland, OR 97228.

Oregon's new text book, *Global Oregon* promotes a thorough understanding of the state's rich natural resources. The book focuses on world trade, life impact, and economic and geographic concepts. (Illustrations by Connie Cohen)



## Smokey Bear Program Brings the Great Outdoors Inside

A series of full-color wildlife posters is available to teachers through the Forest Service's Smokey Bear program.

The 20"x30" posters depict 16 subjects, ranging from snakes, birds, animals and fish to trees, leaves and flowers. One set is available free to teachers, and single posters can be ordered in sets of 200 for a fee.

Smokey Bear's 1989 Campaign Catalog is now in print and contains materials suitable for use in the classroom. The Forest Fire Prevention and Conservation Teacher's Kit contains a teaching unit, playlet and song book. An 11-minute, animated video discusses products made from trees, their benefits, and a conservation song. Comic books tell the true story of the Forest Service's most famous bear, and various stickers, pens, balloons and pamphlets with Smokey's logo are



The Smokey Bear program brings this familiar face and other wildlife symbols to the classroom.

available. Most items are ordered in multiples of a hundred, and a price list is included.

To order your set of posters, and the 1989 campaign catalog, write to: Smokey Bear Program, USDA-Forest Service, P.O. Box 96090, Washington, D.C. 20090-6090.

## Animal Inns: Nature's Four-Star Offering!

"A birdhole in an old dead tree is a front door to a chickadee," reads the tag on a cord of wood removed from the Deschutes National Forest in central Oregon.

It's a catchy rhyme with a serious message. Over 65 species of birds, 30 species of mammals, and two species of amphibians depend on dead trees for food, shelter and bearing their young. "The Animal Inn Program," a project developed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Washington Department of Wildlife, educates woodcutters and the general public about the forest creatures that make dead trees their home.

Created in 1986 at the Deschutes National Forest, the Animal Inn Program's goal is not to discourage woodcutting, but to make the public aware that dead trees are essential to many forms of wildlife. There, it is illegal to cut down Animal Inns, which are identified by paintmarks, wildlife tree signs, broken tops, trunkholes or visible nests. The program has expanded to include the entire Pacific Northwest and Rocky Mountain regions. In 1989, USDA's Forest Service will expand the program nationally.

Also, in the spring, "Animal Inn Meets Students" (AIMS) will be introduced into schools across the country. The Forest Service will direct the program to 3rd and 4th grade classes, using life-size puppets, a live bird demonstration, videos, buttons, bookmarks and balloons to educate youngsters about wildlife habitats.

Among the facts students will learn about Animal Inns:

- Bats use cracked, loosened bark to roost during the day, or as a nursery for their young;
- Woodpeckers are tree-hoppers, excavating between one and three cavities per year before finally picking out their home;
- Up to 167 pygmy nuthatches have inhabited a single tree at the same time.

So, as they say in the Deschutes: "That broken-top tree might not look purdy, but it's home-sweet-home to a little birdy!"

For more information about AIMS, contact Teri Raml, USDA-Forest Service, at (703) 235-8015, or the Forest Service in your state.



## PLEASE, DON'T CUT TREES WITH:



Paint marks



Wildlife signs



Broken tops



Trunk holes  
or visible nests



# Home Economics Teachers Put Good Nutrition on the Table

If you ask the average teenager to describe a balanced meal, don't be surprised if he or she tells you a double cheeseburger and a diet soda.

That's why "The Dietary Guidelines and Your Diet" teaching kit, produced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Human Nutrition Information Service (HNIS), hopes to reach 9th through 12th graders in their home economics classes. The purpose of the kit is to teach students that sound nutrition and a healthy diet sometimes means choosing a baked potato instead of french fries.

"This is the first time our agency has undertaken anything for this audience," says Diane Odland, the project's coordinator. "We realize that it's not just adults that need more education about dietary guidelines."

The kit is composed of three parts: the seven dietary guidelines established by the USDA and the Department of Health and Human Services; mini-bulletins explaining each guideline and providing weight charts, recipes, and tips; and a teacher's guide for classroom use. The guide contains reproduceable activity masters for games and materials, as well as suggestions for classroom activities that are not only educational, but fun! "The kit made me wish I were in home economics again!" laughed Odland.

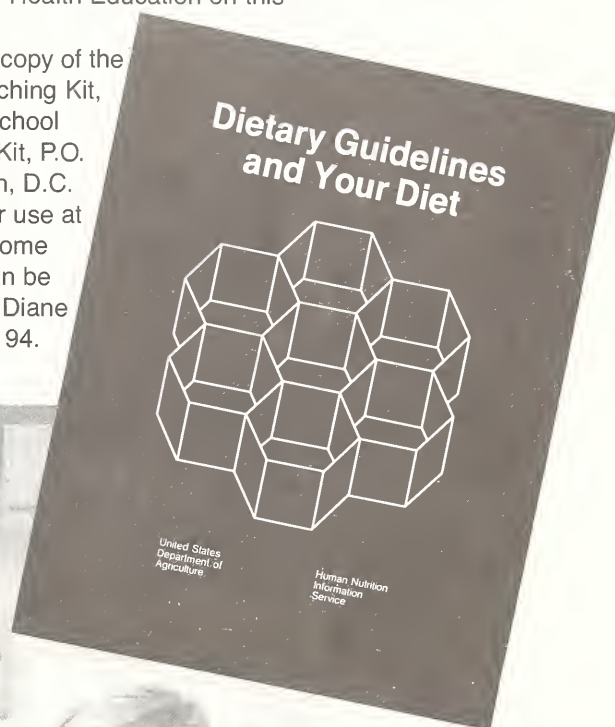
A "Pizza Cook-off Contest," is just one of the projects in the teacher's guide that has students competing to make their number one food choice as nutritious as possible.

Promotional letters and the teaching kit were sent to every state's home economics supervisor, as well as the state nutrition education training coordinators. Ads were placed in home economic magazines, and Odland has had exhibits at such conferences as the American Home Economics Association.

The teacher's kits became available in March, and thus far over 12,000 have been distributed to home economics teachers nationwide. The response has been tremendous, according to Odland, with thank you letters and requests for the materials pouring in from across the country.

While the materials are designed for junior and senior home economics students, Odland does not rule out the possibility of a future kit for younger students. On the agenda for this coming fiscal year are plans to adapt the materials for health education classes. HNIS is working with the Association for the Advancement of Health Education on this project.

To order your single copy of the Dietary Guidelines Teaching Kit, send your request on school stationery to Teaching Kit, P.O. Box 90723, Washington, D.C. 20090-0723. Copies for use at in-service training for home economics teachers can be obtained by contacting Diane Odland at (301) 436-5194.



Students get a healthy taste of good nutrition in their home economics classes with "The Dietary Guidelines and Your Diet" teaching kit. The resource features a low-fat "Pizza Cookoff Contest" and many other educational activities.



The individuals listed here are key reference persons in each state. If you have any questions, want to make reports, or need more information about your state's Ag in the Classroom program, contact the following:

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